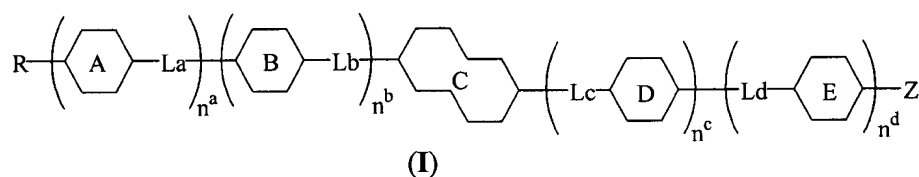


IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 9 and 15 as follows:

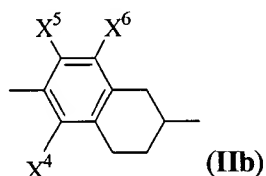
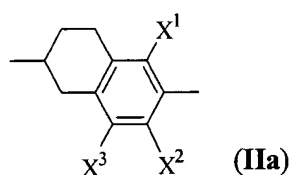
1. (Currently Amended) A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative represented by a general formula (I)



(wherein, R represents a saturated or unsaturated alkyl group or alkoxy group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may incorporate a branched chain and may be substituted with 1 to 7 fluorine atoms or alkoxy groups of 1 to 7 carbon atoms; linkage groups La, Lb, Lc and Ld each represent independently a single bond, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}=\text{CH}-$, $-\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)-$, $-\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)-$, $-\text{CF}_2\text{CF}_2-$, $-\text{CF}=\text{CF}-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{O}-$, $-\text{OCH}_2-$, $-\text{OCH}(\text{CH}_3)-$, $-\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)\text{O}-$, $\text{C}\equiv\text{C}$, $-\text{C}\equiv\text{C}-$, $-\text{CF}_2\text{O}-$, $-\text{OCF}_2-$, $-\text{COO}-$, $-\text{OCO}-$, $-\text{COS}-$ or $-\text{SCO}-$; Z represents a fluorine atom, chlorine atom, cyano group, cyanato group, trifluoromethoxy group or a difluoromethoxy group; ring A, ring B and ring D each represent independently a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group, a trans-decahydronaphthalene-2,6-diyl group, a trans-1,3-dioxane-2,4-diyl group, or a 1,4-phenylene group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms, a pyridine-2,5-diyl group, a pyrimidine-

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2,5-diyl group, a pyrazine-2,5-diyl group, a pyridazine-3,6-diyl group, and a naphthalene-2,6-diyl group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms; ring E represents independently a 1,4-phenylene group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms, and a naphthalene-2,6-diyl group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms, ring C represents either one of a general formula (IIa) and a general formula (IIb)



(wherein, X¹, X², X³, X⁴, X⁵ and X⁶ each represent independently a hydrogen atom or a fluorine atom); and n^a, n^b, n^c and n^d each represent independently either 0 or 1;

although, in a case in which n^c = 1 and n^d = 0, ring D represents a 1,4-phenylene group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms and/or a naphthalene-2,6-diyl group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms;

in a case in which Z is a cyano group, R is an unsubstituted and saturated alkyl group or alkoxy group, n^a = n^c = n^d = 0 and n^b = 1, or n^b = n^c = n^d = 0 and n^a = 1, ring A and ring B are 1,4-phenylene groups, La and Lb are single bonds, and ring C is said general formula (IIa), then at least one of X¹, X² and X³ represents a fluorine atom;

in a case in which Z is a cyano group, R is an unsubstituted and saturated alkyl group or alkoxy group, $n^a = n^b = n^c = 0$ and $n^d = 1$, or $n^a = n^b = n^d = 0$ and $n^c = 1$, ring E and ring D are 1,4-phenylene groups, Lc and Ld are single bonds, -OCH₂- or -COO- linkages, and ring C is said general formula (IIa), then at least one of X¹, X² and X³ represents a fluorine atom;

in a case in which Z is a cyano group, R is an unsubstituted and saturated alkyl group or alkoxy group, $n^a = n^b = n^c = 0$ and $n^d = 1$, or $n^a = n^b = n^d = 0$ and $n^c = 1$, ring E and ring D are 1,4-phenylene groups, Lc and Ld are single bonds or -COO- linkages, and ring C is said general formula (IIb), then at least one of X⁴, X⁵ and X⁶ represents a fluorine atom;

in a case in which Z is a fluorine atom, R is an unsubstituted and saturated alkyl group or alkoxy group, $n^a = n^b = n^c = 0$ and $n^d = 1$, or $n^a = n^b = n^d = 0$ and $n^c = 1$, ring E and ring D are 1,4-phenylene groups, Lc and Ld are -COO- linkages, and ring C is said general formula (IIb), then at least one of X⁴, X⁵ and X⁶ represents a fluorine atom;

and in a case in which ring C is said general formula (IIb), at least one of n^c and n^d is 1).

2. (Original): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), ring C is represented by said formula (IIa).

3. (Original): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), ring C is represented by said formula (IIb).

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4. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), either one of n^a and n^b is 0.

5. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), either one of n^c and n^d is 0.

6. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), $n^a = n^b = 0$.

7. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), $n^c = n^d = 0$.

8. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), at least one of n^a , n^b , n^c and n^d is 1.

9. (Currently amended): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), said linkage groups La, Lb, Lc and Ld are each selected independently from a group consisting of a single bond, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$, and $-\text{C}\equiv\text{C}-$.

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10. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), said linkage groups La, Lb, Lc and Ld are each selected independently from a group consisting of a single bond and $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$.

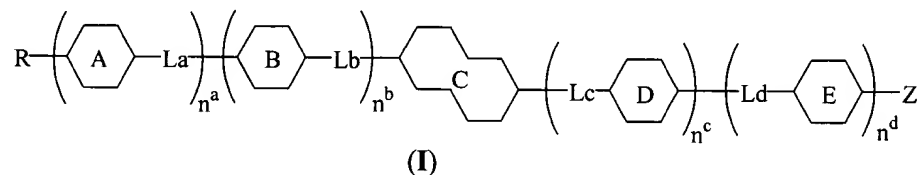
11. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), said linkage groups La, Lb, Lc and Ld are each a single bond.

12. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), ring A, ring B and ring D are each independently selected from a group consisting of a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group, a trans-decahydronaphthalene-2,6-diyl group, a trans-1,3-dioxane-2,4-diyl group, a 1,4-phenylene group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms, and a naphthalene-2,6-diyl group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms.

13. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), Z is a fluorine atom.

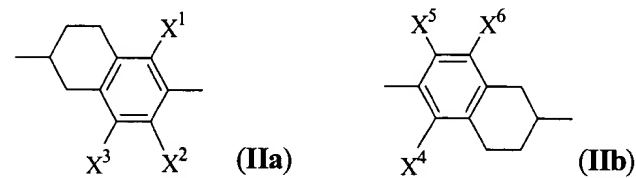
14. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), Z is a cyano group.

15. (Currently amended) A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative represented by a general formula (I)



(wherein, R represents a saturated or unsaturated alkyl group or alkoxyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may incorporate a branched chain and may be substituted with 1 to 7 fluorine atoms or alkoxyl groups of 1 to 7 carbon atoms; linkage groups La, Lb, Lc and Ld each represent independently a single bond, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}=\text{CH}-$, $-\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)\text{CH}_2-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)-$, $-\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)-$, $-\text{CF}_2\text{CF}_2-$, $-\text{CF}=\text{CF}-$, $-\text{CH}_2\text{O}-$, $-\text{OCH}_2-$, $-\text{OCH}(\text{CH}_3)-$, $-\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)\text{O}-$, $-\text{C}\equiv\text{C}-$, $-\text{CF}_2\text{O}-$, $-\text{OCF}_2-$, $-\text{COO}-$, $-\text{OCO}-$, $-\text{COS}-$ or $-\text{SCO}-$; Z represents a fluorine atom, chlorine atom, cyano group, cyanato group, trifluoromethoxy group or a difluoromethoxy group; ring A, ring B and ring D each represent independently a trans-1,4-cyclohexylene group, a trans-decahydronaphthalene-2,6-diyl group, a trans-1,3-dioxane-2,4-diyl group, or a 1,4-phenylene group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms, a pyridine-2,5-diyl group, a pyrimidine-2,5-diyl group, a pyrazine-2,5-diyl group, a pyridazine-3,6-diyl group, and a naphthalene-2,6-diyl group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms; ring E represents independently a 1,4-phenylene group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms, and a naphthalene-2,6-diyl group which

may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms, ring C represents either one of a general formula (IIa) and a general formula (IIb)



(wherein, X^1 , X^2 , X^3 , X^4 , X^5 and X^6 each represent independently a hydrogen atom or a fluorine atom); and n^a , n^b , n^c and n^d each represent independently either 0 or 1;

although, in a case in which $n^c = 1$ and $n^d = 0$, ring D represents a 1,4-phenylene group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms and/or a naphthalene-2,6-diyl group which may be substituted with one or two fluorine atoms;

in a case in which Z is a cyano group, R is an unsubstituted and saturated alkyl group or alkoxy group, $n^a = n^c = n^d = 0$ and $n^b = 1$, or $n^b = n^c = n^d = 0$ and $n^a = 1$, ring A and ring B are 1,4-phenylene groups, La and Lb are single bonds, and ring C is said general formula (IIa), then at least one of X^1 , X^2 and X^3 represents a fluorine atom;

in a case in which Z is a cyano group, R is an unsubstituted and saturated alkyl group or alkoxy group, $n^a = n^b = n^c = 0$ and $n^d = 1$, or $n^a = n^b = n^d = 0$ and $n^c = 1$, ring E and ring D are 1,4-phenylene groups, Lc and Ld are single bonds or -COO- linkages, and ring C is said general formula (IIa), then at least one of X^1 , X^2 and X^3 represents a fluorine atom;

in a case in which Z is a cyano group, R is an unsubstituted and saturated alkyl group or

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alkoxyl group, $n^a = n^b = n^c = 0$ and $n^d = 1$, or $n^a = n^b = n^d = 0$ and $n^c = 1$, ring E and ring D are 1,4-phenylene groups, Lc and Ld are single bonds or -COO- linkages, and ring C is said general formula (IIb), then at least one of X^4 , X^5 and X^6 represents a fluorine atom;

in a case in which Z is a fluorine atom, R is an unsubstituted and saturated alkyl group or alkoxyl group, $n^a = n^b = n^c = 0$ and $n^d = 1$, or $n^a = n^b = n^d = 0$ and $n^c = 1$, ring E and ring D are 1,4-phenylene groups, Lc and Ld are -COO- linkages, and ring C is said general formula (IIb), then at least one of X^4 , X^5 and X^6 represents a fluorine atom;

and in a case in which ring C is said general formula (IIb), at least one of n^c and n^d is 1),

~~A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1,~~ wherein in said general formula (I), Z is a trifluoromethoxy group.

16. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), R is a saturated or unsaturated alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms which may incorporate a branched chain and may be substituted with 1 to 7 fluorine atoms or alkoxyl groups of 1 to 7 carbon atoms.

17. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), R is a saturated or unsaturated straight chain alkyl group of 1 to 20 carbon atoms.

18. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1,

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wherein in said general formula (I), X^3 , X^4 and X^5 in said formula (IIa) and said formula (IIb) are hydrogen atoms.

19. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), X^2 in said formula (IIa) is a hydrogen atom and X^1 is a fluorine atom.

20. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1, wherein in said general formula (I), X^1 in said formula (IIa) is a hydrogen atom and X^2 is a fluorine atom.

21. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1 which shows liquid crystallinity.

22. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1 which shows a nematic phase.

23. (Previously presented): A tetrahydronaphthalene derivative according to claim 1 which upon addition to a nematic liquid crystal composition shows a nematic phase.

24. (Original): A liquid crystal composition containing at least one compound of said

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general formula (I) according to any one of claims 1 through 23.

25. (Original): A liquid crystal composition according to claim 24 which can be used for active matrix driving.

26. (Original): A liquid crystal element comprising a liquid crystal composition according to claim 25 as a structural element.

27. (Previously presented): An active matrix driven liquid crystal display element utilizing a liquid crystal composition according to claim 25.